

## DISCUSSION GUIDE

**LEARN TO LEAD****ENGAGING WITH PUBLIC OFFICIALS FOR POSITIVE CHANGE****Course Description**

The ability to engage effectively with decision makers in the public sector is essential to becoming a community leader. This course pairs effective strategies for outreach and communication with public officials on behalf of citizens with resources and useful tips for productively operating in the public realm.

**Lesson Objectives**

1. How citizens and public officials can adopt the practices associated with forming successful partnerships to engage with each other to address community issues.
2. The role that leadership, management, and networking have in forming successful relationships between advocates and public officials.
3. The responsibilities that advocates and public officials have to maintain a code of ethics and conduct of behavior that benefits the community and not the individual.

**Discussion Questions**

1. What are some of the projects you think would benefit your community that could/should be done in partnership with government entities? Is there also a role for private companies or non-governmental organizations? What role would citizens, government, and private companies or individuals play in developing and implementing this partnership? Remember the four common features of successful partnerships as you answer these questions: clarity, accountability, focus and effective leadership.
2. How can advocates or change makers use networking to engage with candidates or elected officials? What might be the incremental “networking” steps someone could take to gain access to a difficult to reach public official? How would a team of networkers be used to engage with a candidate or elected official and how would you manage those interactions? Who would you include on the team and what roles would they play? How do you ensure that everyone is “on the same page”?
3. Can you identify a leader that you believe is guided by a code of ethics? What would you say are those ethics? Is there a leader that does not live by a code of ethics and why? Do you have your own code of ethics? What are the ethical guidelines that you have set for yourself? Where did you learn them and do you think someone else might think differently about them – someone of a different age, gender, or nationality for example? Are certain ethical considerations universal? How can you interact with someone whose code of ethics doesn’t match perfectly with yours?

**Developmental Action**

1. Take and teach another of the Lead to Learn courses!

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Lessons included in this course: *Understanding Elections and Civic Participation: Engaging with Candidates and Elected Officials, Establishing Professional Ethics in Government, Creating Partnerships, Implementing a Public-Private Partnership, Developing a Personal Code of Ethics, Networking to Get Ahead, Managing Situations*

